2: Skreferud M-5 (1870-1871) 1942 AW42 Santal AW42

g. To neutralize the effect of an eclipse.

821 428 604 593 To neutralize the effect of an eclipse is done as follows. In a year when an eclipse of the sun or the moon is taking place, a mother of children will say: Do, my sons or daughters, go for us to the family of your maternal uncle to neutralize the effect of the eclipse. If they live in the same village, they go that very day to the family of their maternal uncle. When they have reached there, they say: We have come, uncle, to neutralize the effects of the eclipse. They say to them: All right, my boy (or my girl). Now the mother of these children has brewed beer and takes this to her father's house; and they drink this, pouring some out as a libation. If her father is living, he says to her: What is it, my girl, that you have in mind and have brought? If her father is not living, her brothers will also ask her in the same way. She then says: You remember, your nephews or grandchildren came to neutralize the effets of the eclipse; it is in connexion with this that we have come. Now if the old man is alive, he calls all the boys together. If he is not alive, the brothers come together and consult each other. And they give them a fowl or a goat or a sheep or a pig. If these multiply, then only these children have a right to this property because the wives of all the sons fetch this eclipse-neutralizing from their father or brothers. Therefore the heirs on both sides have no right to get anything of the possible increase of these. Only of their own accord the brothers of both sides may give the children a bull- or a heifer calf. They say that formerly, when the cows or the sheep or goats multiplied in the home of a wife's father, and the girl was bringing this live stock from there to her husband's home, then the bongs of her father's home would also come along. Then if this bongs [769] did not return, her husband would have to worship the bongs of the old home of his wife.

h. About harvest perquisites.

421 562 The harvest perquisites are as follows: When a man's daughter, while unmarried, gets harvest perquisites, her father and brothers will lend her perquisites to somebody at 50 pct. And when these perquisites increase, and from this also cattle multiply, then at the time when her husband brings to his home what has multiplied in the old home of his wife, the bongs of some people will also, it is told, follow together with this property. Therefore some people do not let what they have remain there for a long time, fearing that the bongas will come along. And when anyone marries them, also the brothers of the husband have a right to the harvest perquisites property. But then the father and the brothers of the girl will call out to get a higher brideprice; because they say: We are sending with this our daughter or sister, or: what she owns, half our household. Therefore we shall take a higher brideprice, and of this you will not get anything in return. And when she acquires harvest perquisites after having become a widow or been divorced and this increases, then, in case friends apply for her and she is remarried, this woman alone has

3i Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1902
AW42 Santal AW42

533 In the following poem a boy is pressing his
539 mother to tame a pair of birds:—
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Burucetanre kadañ gupi,
Sugasara cenrenïñ ciàakat' kin
Cara bànuk' babu, ţena bànuk.'
Sugà-sara cèn*r*èn bàbulañ cekakinà.
Carayo iñgiñ àgui, tenayo iñgiñ benao.
Enrehon, sugà-sara cèn*ţ*enyolañ àsulkinge.

(Translation)

Boy sings:

O mother,
While I was grazing buffaloes on the top of the hill,
I saw a pair of *Suk-sari* birds (there).

The mother replies:

We have no food to give them, no cage to keep them.
What shall we do with the birds, O my son!

Boy sings again:

I myself will bring food and make myself the cage (for them).
Yet, O mother, we shall rear them.

Other Songs

•821 As an agricultural people, the hopes and fears
152 of the Santals are knit up with the freaks of weather.

Jt Mukherjea O. Y-4,5 (ca. 1933-1939) 1962
AW42 Santal AW42

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Here is a person consoling a Santal named Kisun, to wait patiently for a better day when the drought would be over and rains would shower to enable the corn grow: —

Bilkema gele Kisun mathai hat dite Kisun
Kene Kisun kando?
Dhaner sis dada marigela
Matira chati phati gela.
Na Kisun kandore na Kisun bhabare.
Iswarer maya jadi hayta primthimite, jal jadi pareta,
Tumi Kisun khiti samara.

(Translation)

Why, O Kisun, are you weeping resting your head on your palm near the *bil* (lake)?
The ears of corn, O brother, have dried away,
The heart of the earth breaks (through the drought).
Don't cry, O Kisun, don't worry, O Kisun,
Should God will it and rains fall on earth,
You Kisun can reap corn in plenty.

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Plenty of devotional songs are sung by the Santals in honour of the tribal gods. Here is one invoking Mònṛènko (the Fives):

Mònṛènkodo mònṛènboeha
Ja Gosane turui kòdo turuiboeha

4: Biswas D, E-3, 4 (1931-1945) 1956
AW42 Santal AW42
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way : the husband is made to stand facing the sun on one leg (generally the left). He has a cloth round his neck each end of which is held in the hand along with three sal leaves. Then taking the name of Sin-Bonga he tears the sal leaves in token of separation and upsets a brass pot full of water. This is repeated by the wife also.[1]

Birth and Naming Ceremony : When the Santal woman becomes pregnant, she and her husband observe certain taboos. The husband during his wife's pregnancy never kills any animal, nor participates in any funeral ceremony and does not come in contact with any dead body. The pregnant woman during the evening very rarely comes out of the house, she never crosses any streamlet, she does not weep when any death occurs of her relations. On the day of the moon-eclipse she does not come out of the room. She should not sit on the verandah with her hair or her cloth hanging down on the courtyard side. All these taboos signify that the Santals have a strong belief that malevolent spirits or witches do mischief to the pregnant women.

The Santals believe that after ten months the women give birth. When the labour pain starts the pregnant woman is confined in a room, which is generally a corner of the house or a portion of the verandah partitioned with bamboo and leaves. At birth, an experienced elderly woman of the village or of the adjoining village officiates as midwife. No one is allowed to remain there except one or two female relatives of the pregnant woman. After birth, the umbilical cord is

[1]There is a belief that if the sal leaves are not fully torn or the lota not wholly emptied then the couple must again come together.

St-Culshaw M-5 (1932-1943) 1949 AW42 Santal AW42

his courtyard after the midday meal used to make sure of rising at the right time by telling his children to waken him when the shadows had reached a certain spot.

During the night the time is indicated not only by the position of the moon but also by the stars, and particularly by reference to the constellation Pleiades. There are at least two myths relating to the sun and the moon. In the one the sun is male and the moon female, while the stars are their children. The absence of the stars from the sky in daytime is explained by a story that they made a pact to eat their children. The sun carried out the bargain and so there are no stars visible by daylight, but the moon evaded her promise and so some of the children survived. The other version says that both the sun and the moon are male; they became related to each other by marrying each other's sisters. Only a few of the stars and constellations are named. The Pleiades have the same name as one of the clans; the Milky Way is known as the "cow track", and the Great Bear is the "old woman's bed".

Between the harvest and the Spring festival, a period which corresponds with the cold weather, the villages present a deserted appearance, due to the annual migration to the east for work in the harvest fields of the Ganges delta. This seasonal migration, dictated by economic necessity, plays an important part in the life of the area. Farther to the north many Santals work in the coal-mines round Asansol, while to the south labour is drawn to the great steel town of Tatanagar. In this area migration to industrial centres is rare; the Santals regard the conditions in industrial towns as highly dangerous to health, and they affirm that nothing will induce them to go there. The same reason, however, does not prevent them from leaving their own villages in a non-malarious tract of country for the malarious rice-growing areas farther east, in consequence of which the money earned is often more than spent in the expenses of protracted illness and long periods of idleness. Each village organizes its own party of migrants, who go to work for the same masters year after year. The wages they receive are more than double what is paid in their own locality, and so they earn the money required to pay rent, to meet social expenditure for marriages, and to pay off old debts. The homes are left in charge of the aged, and some of the children are left behind. The villages are denuded of able-bodied men and women, apart from a few who do not need to go. Family parties travel together, babies and very young children being carried

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consequently overlap the sphere of "religion", which, however, covers experiences where the arts of magic do not reach, while magic also works independently in some situations. For the most part, the various approaches to the problems of living are simultaneously pursued, by individuals as well as by society. "Charms" are in almost universal use as a precaution against sickness; one finds the shell of a land tortoise hung in the cowshed to ward off smallpox, or cowrie shells worn as a protection against the evil eye, and amulets worn round the arm as a matter of routine and called *ran*, or medicine. A double attitude is most apparent in efforts to control the weather that plays so great a rôle in their life. In a period of great drought the Santals probably arrange for a special festival to be held, with sacrifices offered to the "Five". At the same time they busy themselves in other ways which are quite independent of the sacrifice. Unmarried girls plaster the dancing floor with cowdung, while the married women do the same to their own courtyards. An investigation is made as to whether any woman has tied a rope on any roof. It is taboo for women to climb on roofs in the ordinary way, but some of the cowsheds and outbuildings have low roofs on which it would be possible to tie the straw to a rafter without climbing up. If it transpires that any woman has done so, she is made to climb up on to the roof and undo her work, first removing her clothing. Other investigations are made too. It may be that someone has stored dried *matkom* on the floor in her house instead of placing it on a plank or on stones; or it may be that oil has been stored in a sealed pot, in which case the covering must be removed. Underlying all these activities is the conviction that the welfare of society and of the individual depends on establishing a balance between man, nature and the spirit world, and they witness to a faith that such a balance is possible of achievement.